



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

OPENING PLENARY SESSION

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In introducing the opening plenary, Mr. Cummings indicated the aim of the session is to exchange ideas about Round Table experiences across Canada.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Honourable Gary Filmon, Premier of Manitoba welcomed those present at this first meeting of the Round Tables to share information on various initiatives, programs and experiences. The opening session was to update all on the progress to sustainable development. Together we can start on a national consensus on where to go with Round Tables in the 1990's.

It is critical to come together to share ideas for the advancement of sustainable development. Such events and activities as GLOBE 90 and Earth Day indicate that people are not waiting to be told what to do.

The Premier would like to see better linkages between the Round Tables to achieve, for instance, better interjurisdictional co-operation, consistency and regulations. We must examine the role of such other organizations as the new International Institute. The Premier indicated that actions will define sustainable development much better than words. Here is an opportunity to help and learn from each other; to develop concrete strategies.

Robert Page, Chair, Canadian Environment Advisory Council

As a spectator to the process, Professor Page indicated the Round Table movement is a powerful force for progress and change, but the task is daunting given the complexity of our country and the diversity of the interests involved.

It is a remarkable achievement that every government has or is forming a Round Table, especially when controversies plague the country and hinder co-operation. The Round Tables are an essential tool to combat the environmental challenges, unprecedented in our history. Future generations will judge us by our actions not our words.

The National Task Force to CCREM included the establishment of Round Tables and a call for action. These efforts are part of a uniquely Canadian effort to be reported on at the World Conference in 1992 in Brazil. But we must look at the challenges facing us,

1. to attract and retain services of leading decision-makers,
2. To guard the reporting relationship to the first Minister and Cabinet,
3. to define the goals and put shape and substance to the nebulous concept of sustainable development,
4. to communicate with the uncertain public, while avoiding isolation from government industry and the NGO's,
5. to mobilize political will to change the resistant bureaucratic process,
6. to achieve adequate and able resources for the Round Tables,
7. to tackling the municipal and international dimensions of sustainable development, and
8. to balance and integrate the economic and ecological principles of sustainable development.

Professor Page concluded with two basic points. The Task Force Report remains an impressive document for advice and secondly, the sense of urgency is devastatingly clear.

National Round Table, Dr. David Johnston

Dr. Johnston indicated there are two broad ways in which the National Round Table functions: inwardly as an adviser to the federal government and as a catalyst for principles of sustainable development. Round tables should concentrate on doing what they are uniquely able to do, and which other organizations cannot. However there is no "textbook" to follow, so they need self-discipline and concentration on objectives while being also flexible and innovative.

British Columbia, Charles Connaghan

British Columbia's Round Table has been in existence for just 14 weeks. It has no MLA's, but two Deputy Ministers participate, and it reports to Cabinet will be made public.

New Brunswick, Dr. Louise Lapierre

New Brunswick's 15-member Round Table, including five government members, began in 1988. It is now in the second phase of consultations, with a report expected by the end of the year. The draft strategy, to be presented to the premier next year following final public responses, will integrate problems and opportunities and also identify a number of possible demonstration projects in each of its 13 sectors.

Northwest Territories, The Hon. Dennis Patterson

NWT began its round table process in the Throne Speech in February, although it previously has been involved in sustainable development policy processes. The NWT is presently negotiating major accords with the federal government to acquire greater control over a number of areas affecting natural resources.

Nova Scotia, Susan Holtz

The Nova Scotia round table follows "a fairly standard model" with about 20 members reporting to the Premier. One of its unique aspects has been the involvement of a voluntary committee, which was previously established to support the work of another department.

Quebec, Andre Belisle

The 11-member Quebec Round Table (including three ministers) began in 1988. It has developed a code of ethics and held extensive public consultations. The basic message received was a call for more emphasis and action on environmental matters.

Prince Edward Island, Diane Griffin

The province adopted its own conservation strategy in 1987, now being updated prior to the Round Table's existence. The PEI Round Table is composed entirely of volunteers, and looks to other Round Tables for support.

Saskatchewan, Frank Arnie

Saskatchewan is very dependent on volunteer co-operation. Mr. Arnie, citing its current economic condition, said Saskatchewan is being very innovative and pragmatic in developing its conservation strategy. Eleven sector-by-sector studies are being conducted, largely by volunteers.

Yukon, Lindsay Staples

The 12-member Yukon Round Table has two ministers as ex-officio members and reports to the Premier. Together with native representatives on the Round Table, the Yukon is also emphasizing co-operative management of resource policy development.

Alberta, Kurt Gesell

Alberta began its process in the 1989 Throne Speech. When the Round Table is in place, it will be a high-level policy body to advise the government on sustainable development and to integrate economic and environmental decision-making.

Ontario, Jon Grant

The 21-member Ontario Round Table has been operated for 18 months. It has six cabinet ministers from economic and environmental portfolios, and other members from various backgrounds. Before the end of June, the Ontario Round Table will release a challenge paper to involve the public in Ontario.



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PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 1A: PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Cummings described the work on developing a set of principles as a major preoccupation of the National Round Table's subcommittee on Communication and Education. He acknowledged the difficulty of determining a principle from a guideline, and that sustainable development itself is not a precise concept. The development of principles and guidelines are therefore essential for clarification. Manitoba developed ten fundamental principles and six fundamental process-oriented guidelines, all to be part of the "core" document.

In addition to defining the concept of sustainable development, the principles assist in implementation by providing a benchmark to measure our progress towards a sound environment and sustainable economic growth.

The Round Table prepared its "core" document, including principles, referred it for government approval and had it reviewed by a sustainable development technical advisory committee of senior departmental managers, by the Interdepartmental Planning Board of Deputy Ministers, and then by the Sustainable Development Committee of Cabinet and cabinet as a whole.

Principles and guidelines are not cast in stone. This is an evolving process. Susan Holt indicated that although she was not a member of the National Round Table's Committee on this topic she was keenly interested and concerned. In her opinion, developing principles is important to clarify concepts, but as any beginning in process such things can become dated very quickly.

She stressed openness of discussions and the need to build in a process of review to allow for incorporation of new insights.

In discussing the evolution of the concept of sustainable development, emphasis was placed on the fact that tensions exist, but that all perspectives need to be brought together. The Brundtland formulation of the concept does this. There are fundamental goals that must be simultaneously incorporated.

Human needs and the ability of our institutions to meet those needs without impairing our planet were two key points. We can look at the negative side in terms of "what we don't want to impair," but also look at the positive side in terms of "what do we want to enhance and support." Are human needs being met and can they be met in better ways. Until we address these issues we will not easily change our patterns of consumption.

We need to sustain two things: the ecosystem/our planet and our human systems/societies. To accomplish this we must meet human needs, protect and restore ecosystems, and enhance social resilience. By this is meant a change in mind-set; a shift from our emphasis on avoiding risk and maximizing control to enhancing our ability to respond to change. It is the difference between "fail safe" and "safe fail."

Participants at the session again indicated that the development of principles sets a benchmark, with the process of arriving at them being important. Once a definition of sustainable development is arrived at where do you go from there? Organizing around the development of sectoral strategies is difficult too. Conflicts are fundamental between economics/environmental aspects, between jobs and beauty. Things must be economically viable or they won't work. You can have ecological protection but at what price?

Even in the past, human beings impacted on the environment. It is not possible to avoid affecting the ecology in one way or another. It is a question of what is reasonable. We must think about uncommon solutions. It will take time and we must be cautious of absolutes.

The development of a strategy rather than an ultimate definition of sustainable development allowed for the extraction of a set of principles and guidelines to use as a yardstick. However, there is a danger in being too succinct: they may not be seen as relevant or applicable but too universal.

The public fears growth of the bureaucracy. We need to be pragmatic. Perhaps a principle should be to address the most serious problems. Education and information are needed to make people aware. The principles can be used as an education tool.

The Brundtland and World Conservation Strategy should be reflected in the principles which can be embodied relevant legislation for the development of regulations, policies, etc.

A participant suggested that if your approach is too sectoral you may lose the global, broader issues. Once principles are agreed upon, we need to move on to "indicators." When there is a lot of panic and logic isn't being applied, we need a solid indicators approach. Applying the principles and guidelines provides the basis for discussion in sectoral areas.

It is difficult to value aesthetics. Non-economic valuation is being explored. Full cost accounting may be a principle. This is a new field but work is being done. It means factoring in an inventory of the natural resource base and what it means to the provincial account. There is a value conflict here. In finding a common denominator, this model adopts one frame of reference - dollars. Other frames of reference should be explored. Aesthetics and spiritual values strike at the heart of the issue.

Some of what we do is contradictory and we won't be seen as serious. For example, we can't end rail service and complain there are too many trucks.

A specific question was raised about the use of the terms "global" and "international." It was commented that national boundaries cause us to take account of things differently within our boundaries. Concern is often defined geographically. Local people are concerned with local impact and less concerned about global/international impacts.



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PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 1B: DEVELOPING STRATEGIES - CONTENT (PART ONE)

We can consider either sustainable development or conservation strategy and look at content as opposed to the process.

The Northwest Territories is in the beginning stages, having announced the establishment of a Round Table after major public consultation on Sustainable Development policy. There was government participation, but extensive public discussion was the key. The policy contains principles of sustainable development, guidelines for the economy and ecology, objectives and a commitment to a development action plan. It is administered primarily by the Department of Renewable Resources and by other government departments. Sustainable development policy is ready to be approved, but the action plan will implement and state the commitment. The process will require annual public reports on progress.

Ontario started 18 months ago with the Round Table largely as a result of growing interest in the environment. Originally set up with six cabinet ministers it then went to the business community, farmers, northerners, and others, and included strong-minded and opinionated people who were beneficial to the process. Cabinet ministers had to straighten out their own agendas which held up the process to some degree. There was some concern that public perception was that this was all show with no sustained involvement and the eventual collapse of the initiative.

The key strategy to build and maintain public support was setting up the sustainable development committee. It involved a series of meetings/challenges for public and business involvement.

The committee's first paper was very proactive. There was a surprising amount of understanding between the private sector and environmental groups. However, a key point to be made is that senior ministers must get on board. They have to be sold.

Discussion

These are the aims of the Northwest Territories draft policy for sustainable development.

1. The GNWT shall promote economic development which maintains essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and harvestable resources at sustainable levels.
2. The G.N.W.T. shall routinely combine and equally weigh conservation and development factors in decision-making processes for the use of resources.
3. Sustainable development of resources is essential to the long term economic, cultural and social well-being of northern residents.
4. Northern residents shall be assured meaningful input and participation in decisions related to conservation and resource development.
5. Initiatives associated with this policy shall be consistent with or complement, all agreements, policies and legislation related to the settlement of aboriginal claims as they relate to conservation and development of resources.
6. Conservation and development practices shall take into account the local knowledge, values and experience to be found among the regular users of the environment as well as the information developed in academic institutions, industry and government.
7. Natural resources should be managed so that opportunities for future resource uses are maximized and maintenance of ecosystems is ensured.
8. Conservation commitments in resource development proposals shall be a major consideration in determining the degree of G.N.W.T.'s political and financial support.



9. The G.N.W.T. recognizes the need for conservation areas to maintain special values related to wildlife and wildlife habitat, unique or representative ecosystems, prime forests, productive agricultural soils, and heritage, recreational, tourism, scientific, and aesthetic resources. The G.N.W.T. shall support human activities in such areas where they are compatible with the values being protected.
10. Enhanced cooperation with other circumpolar and neighbouring jurisdictions is important in addressing transboundary concerns related to resource management and the maintenance of environmental quality.
11. As far as possible, implementation of this policy will rely primarily on existing mechanisms and processes or those already under development through land claims or other processes.

To some extent these eleven points have some universal threads. The Manitoba Round Table has developed similar ones; they have been passed on to the National Round Table.

New Brunswick also has similar principles. The fact is, there is a tremendous commonality and shared ground between all jurisdictions.

It takes considerable discussion to determine what will go into a strategy. In Ontario, a consultant was hired to work with all representatives on the committee. The consultant worked on an individual level and focused all input. The next step was to "throw it back" to the committee. In effect, the process of defining sustainable development and devising principles was skipped. In hindsight, this may have been a mistake, but there was an urgency to get going.

In New Brunswick, there is major input from a variety of sources organized into 13 sectoral groups which formed the core of the process. There were over 220 public presentations by 13 selected groups.

The draft strategy is to be developed within two years. It will be in two parts:

1. A philosophical document for changing mind sets; with major implications for way we do business, and
2. A demonstration project which, the actual strategy, to bring it down to management and community level.

Funding for demonstration projects comes largely from tax on gambling and lotteries. The \$20 million budget will be spent on demonstration projects, e.g. household hazardous waste disposal program.

In P.E.I. it is essentially a government strategy. The major concern is how to involve the private sector.

Demonstration projects would be such as local forestry initiatives. The major hope for this excellent initial response from several communities for demonstration projects will be imaginative ways of integrating the environment and the economy, and building support.

Another major concern is what happens if there is a change of government. Will this spell the end of the sustainable development initiative? This is unlikely because this initiative seems to have taken on a life of its own.

A major part of the success lies in getting stakeholders involved in the process. In some cases it has doubled the success of the process. In order to get industry involved, it should be made economically attractive. Once they are brought on side, a new life is injected into the process.

What would be extremely useful right now is a formal mechanism where the provinces can exchange ideas and information. CARTS (Canadian Association of Round Table Administrators) may be a way of doing this. We cannot afford to be reinventing the wheel independent of each other.



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PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 1C: COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The task is to identify effective strategies, methods and techniques for communicating the sustainable development message to the Canadian public. A good deal of dialogue took place on the media role and responsibility.

Leon Pippard from the National Round Table functioned as resource person for the session and summarized the initiatives of the National Round Table in communication. His background as a writer and journalist provided useful insights to the discussion.

Analysis suggests that only one out of five Canadians has seen or heard the term sustainable development, and that there is little understanding of the concept. This is viewed quite differently from environmental issues which seem to be much better understood, are very topical and are receiving attention.

In developing a national communication strategy, the thrust, principles and guidelines must be clear. A forum was held with the media to determine the

1. media's view of sustainable development,
2. coverage of sustainable development, and
3. what the media feels should be done.

A document that identified the various action thrusts was an end product of the forum and included the following.

1. Editorial board briefings.
2. Case studies and analysis.
3. Feature story dialogue.
4. Development of public service announcements.
5. Media tools for Round Table members.
6. Round Table kits for municipalities.
7. Canadian Science Fair awards for sustainable development.
8. Participation-type sustainable development program.
9. Computer-based information process.
10. Electronic newsletter.

The media expressed a desire for a central source for sustainable development information.

Open Discussion

The inclusion of persons from the commercial media or Round Table members could ensure adequate communications. However, this may be viewed as unfair competition or could compromise the media. Media association membership might provide the solution.

Media were criticised on their coverage of sustainable development issues, with examples cited of poor local coverage from both GLOBE 90 and the Winnipeg Partners for the Future Conference. It is also difficult for reporters to convince editors of the importance of sustainable development and, therefore, Round Tables should be involved with editorial boards.


There were concerns about the national Green Plan in that it does not link to the National Round Table and to sustainable development. Linkages are required between the National, Provincial and Territorial Round Tables to reduce or eliminate overlap and duplication, and must be a two-way process.

The first task is to sort out what the message on sustainable development needs to be for all Round Tables. The second task is to determine how to deliver. Outside consultation might provide the solution to the second task.

Communication is a key as to how we will progress and how we will stay out of trouble with the media. There must be something concrete such as demonstration projects and activities to report on, since concepts are too difficult to report on. It is also felt that we have a narrow window of time in which to reflect a credible story, but better no story than a poor message.

Summary

Three primary communications needs were identified: the need to have a consistent message; the need to work jointly; the need for dealing with communication/education as an urgency. However, there was no agreement on how to best bring this about.



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PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 1D: PUBLIC SECTOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Honourable Mr. Penner stated that sustainable development must be implemented in the public sector if we are to bring about the required changes in our society to ensure a healthy environment and an economy capable of meeting the future needs of our citizens. Public institutions are critical in our everyday life. They are not only legislators, but also developers, consumers, policy agents, stewards and partners in the environment and economy. The public sector is not structured to address the environment and the economy in an integrated and sustainable manner.

Mr. Penner stated that Round Tables, with their broad cross-sectoral membership are well suited to provide the necessary changes to implement sustainable development in the public sector. Firstly, business, environmentalists, labour and non-government organizations can provide a perspective not readily available from within. Secondly, Round Tables can influence and obtain the required ongoing political commitment.

One of the objectives of the Manitoba Round Table is to review and advise upon implementation of sustainable development within the public sector. A three-phased approach has been approved by the Provincial Cabinet. The first phase is the development of an advisory document, which will be prepared by the Round Table. This document will include recommendations for government action based on the recently approved principles and guidelines of sustainable development, the recommendations of the Bruntland Commission, and the report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy.

The second phase of the process will be the development of a provincial action plan, which will involve consultation with all government departments and agencies, municipal governments and interest groups.

The final phase is the provincial implementation plan detailing the necessary resources and responsibilities for Action Plan implementation.

To ensure this the provincial government has established the Sustainable Development Committee of Cabinet and the Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit. The Round Table has organized itself into seven sub-committees, with one responsible for the implementation of sustainable development in the public sector.

This co-operative approach to consensus decision making by the Manitoba Government and the Manitoba Round Table has required the interrelationship and bridges between the two structures. This has been accomplished in two ways. Firstly, the Premier chairs the Round Table. Secondly, the ministers on the Sustainable Development Committee of Cabinet are also members of the Manitoba Round Table.

Mr. Tony Dorsey, referring to a research project of the Fraser River Basin, said we have to ask the question, "What is new about sustainable development?" His answer was that the principles of sustainable development have been around for a long time, however they have not been put into practice. He identified the following seven major challenges.

1. There is an increased number of systems to deal with.
2. The spacial boundaries of systems are expanding.
3. Time scales are lengthened.
4. There are increased demands on science; the research questions are increasingly complicated.
5. There is pervasive uncertainty that we must learn to live with; there are limits to knowledge.
6. Ethical concerns are heightened.
7. There is greater need for consensus and it is imperative we develop ways to deal with conflict.

Mr. Dorsey indicated the four areas to be examined in relation to the implementation of sustainable development in the public sector.

The first concerns our current way of managing. More specifically, are we now managing in a sustainable development way?" He said, we have policies and legislation that include the principles of sustainable development, but they are not in practice due to a lack of political will. Legislation is not enforced and agencies with a mandate to monitor and protect the environment have insufficient resources. We do not have to ask what we have to do to implement sustainable development. We already know.

A second area in question is the structure of our decision-making mechanisms. The linkages between the decision-making bodies--political-legislative, legal-judicial, bureaucratic-administrative, and economic-market--are crucial to the implementation of sustainable development. How the Round Tables fit into and assist the decision-making processes also have to be answered.

A third area concerns the generation of information. There is much information available, but we don't all believe it. We teach analytical tools in the education system, but do not teach how to agree on using these tools in the decision-making processes. Round Tables can play an important role in this respect as they require information.

Finally, most individuals lack communication, co-operation and conflict resolution skills that are required to interact productively with others. This is a fundamental problem that affects our inability to reach agreement on issues.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 1E: MARKET INCENTIVES & FISCAL POLICIES FOR IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Market incentives and the exploration of fiscal policy are an important component of sustainable development. It will require the joint efforts of the public and private sectors to develop a range of options to replace, supplement and augment our current approaches.

Resource Persons

The inclusion of this topic on the agenda suggests we've come a long way. Five years ago we wouldn't have had this discussion. It suggests there are more levers available to us than ever before. Let's use them.

Traditionally, the focus was on regulations, the "command and control" approach. It's been a comfortable strategy as it has elements of certainty.

Initially regulations were ways of licensing organizations to pollute, then they set minimum standards. Recently, the punitive aspects of regulations have been given greater importance. A recent OECD study on market incentives pointed to charges, penalties and performance bonds as possible tools, but these aren't incentives, they are disincentives, i.e. if you misbehave, we will take it out of your pocket.

Regulations are also based conceptually on a "trickle down" theory. Penalties on corporations are translated into higher prices which are passed on to customers.

The emphasis today should be more positive and more motivating. Healthy self-interested groups and individuals move more quickly than any other types of organisations. Examples of approaches which would be considered include the following.

1. Accelerated depreciation tax, write-offs for environmentally sensitive equipment approved by the Environment Ministry.
2. Research and development write-offs to encourage more work on environmental technology.

3. "Green" bonds, a sector of Canadian Savings Bonds for the Environment.

4. Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Investment, a group of financiers responsible for investing large pension funds who have made a commitment to invest only in companies which are environmentally sensitive. This sends a strong message to CEO's looking for capital.

In Manitoba we have learned a number of lessons to date:

1. We are running behind public opinion.
2. Science isn't well developed in this area so we must make certain today's solution does not create tomorrow's problems.
3. Constant re-evaluation is required to insure unintended messages are not communicated as a result of a single action.

Discussion

Excise taxes on cigarettes and liquor are intended to discourage consumption and may create government dependency on these taxes as a source of revenue.

Agricultural subsidies have had a strong influence on farming practices and a negative impact on the environment.

The reductions of these subsidies toward energy conservation, tree planting on marginal land and in combination with a carbon based tax was proposed. This approach would also have the impact of making the Third World agricultural industry more competitive.

In discussing changes to these subsidies, it must be remembered that they are part of a broader North American and European cheap food policy.



In Manitoba, a beginning has been made toward changing farming practices through the development of a Provincial Soil and Water Strategy. The public wants to have input into decision-making and the development of a strategy. The farmers recognized that there were problems with current farming practices and were anxious to suggest alternatives. We have introduced small demonstration projects and have obtained the co-operation of wildlife groups to work on joint projects.

We need to examine the impact of our present system of subsidies and incentives in order to assess their impact in terms of sustainable development not in order to "identify villains." An important role for Provincial and the National Round Tables may be in resolving interjurisdictional issues surrounding subsidies for Canada's Agricultural and National Resource industries.

While there is general agreement about the need for incentives, the introduction of tradable emission permits may raise objections from the environmental movement which may see the permits as a licence to pollute.

How can environmental concerns be incorporated into lending policies?

The World Bank has begun to reflect environmental issues in its loans to Third World countries.

Provincial and federal governments could give priority or a preferential interest rate on loans to businesses incorporating environmental issues into their proposals and business plans.

Here are examples of innovative approaches.

The prospectus prepared for a coal-burning generating station raised its value from \$300 million to \$3.2 million (\$10 million to install clean coal burning equipment and \$10 million to protect a Guatemalan environmentally sensitive area). The financial community reacted positively to this prospectus.

A New England utility has chosen to subsidize upgrading of insulation in all new and existing homes.

An Utility was sued over its plan to down the two remaining wild streams in the State. As part of the out-of-court settlement, the utility instituted a program to encourage businesses to build energy-efficient facilities. When planning to construct a new building the company identifies the total annual cost of utilities for its new building. The utility then convenes a meeting of architects, contractors and engineers involved in building design to identify improvements to reduce energy costs. If the company chooses not to implement some or all of the energy-saving suggestions, then the utility intervenes and subsidizes their installation. The utility charges the company monthly fees based on its original utility costs to cover its costs. This approach also encourages the building trades to work together in designing more energy-efficient building.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 1F: DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - CRITERIA

The approach being taken to identify and develop demonstration projects in Manitoba, Quebec, Saskatchewan and British Columbia was examined. The Manitoba approach was described as consisting of two phases: an awards program and the implementation of new programs illustrating sustainable development. Manitoba is also provide workshops for educational purposes and to involve people at the grassroots level.

The awards program meeting requires the following criteria developed by the Manitoba Round Table. The project

1. exemplifies the fundamental principles and guidelines of sustainable development,
2. demonstrates the value of sound sustainable environment development,
3. demonstrates the value of sustainable economic development, the project being commercially or potentially viable,
4. demonstrates the social value of sustainable development,
5. demonstrates the educational value of sustainable development, and
6. shows measurable improvement (innovation) over existing traditional practices.

It was noted that projects should be dramatic with none of the criteria being violated. In Quebec, the Round Table developed criteria for the evaluation of a number of projects at a forum on sustainable development in the fall of 1989 in Montreal. Over 200 projects were evaluated and about 50 were publicly recognized at the forum.

The projects were classified into the following categories: Resources, Energy, Clean Technology, Project Financing, Change of attitudes and World Interdependence.

The projects were further classified according to the type of action proposed.

1. Prevention.
2. Conservation.
3. Recycling.
4. Restoration.
5. Education.

The following criteria were imperative for a project to be eligible; the approach must be new, it must have an application, financing must be in place.

In addition, a number of criteria were desirable for a project to qualify.

1. It should be an experience that can be generalized.
2. Have positive potential social impacts.
3. Promote equity in population.
4. Have results that are measurable.
5. Create jobs.

Manitoba is selecting existing projects and giving them awards. Individuals in Saskatchewan have required recognition from the Round Table for their efforts related to sustainable development.

There was some agreement that a wide variety of demonstration projects should be chosen. Also, care must be taken to carefully evaluate projects so that they are indeed good examples of sustainable development. A bad choice could affect the credibility of the program.

Manitoba is considering a proposal to integrate a wildlife organization office complex and interpretive centre into a wetland area. If properly planned this could be considered a demonstration project for sustainable development. It was noted that there was a similar project in Saskatchewan.

In Manitoba, a panel will be appointed to evaluate projects. These will be published in a newsletter. The intention in British Columbia is to publish the projects as well. In Quebec, the projects were publicized in a document presented to a public forum in the fall of 1989. Quebec also has a journal published by the Round Table. In Manitoba even a government department could qualify for a demonstration project.

In conclusion: criteria should be carefully developed for evaluating projects, but not necessarily funded through Round Tables. The projects should be practical and properly financed. They should represent a new approach.





FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES ROND SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 2A: PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This workshop explored the principles of sustainable development with a wide-ranging discussion. The participants considered the need for a broad definition of sustainable development, basic value systems, the application of the principles, and the enormous challenge which lies ahead. There was an interesting mix between the theoretical and the practical. One participant challenged another to shrink "the big picture" down to some actual applications; the other responded that we need to understand the "big picture" in order to frame our actions. A third participant suggested that there needs to be an equilibrium of short- and long-term actions, and compared us to the pilot who needs a good horizon as a guide to see where we are going.

The term "sustainable development" must not be too narrowly defined. One participant noted that, to date, much of the discussion about sustainable development has been an attempt to integrate economic and environmental decision-making processes. But there is a need to address much more basic questions. The basic, intrinsic value of the natural world must be established. We must also understand and appreciate social and cultural systems and their natural evolutionary processes.

Another speaker re-enforced this discussion by emphasizing the need to address fundamental value questions. We must be explicit about our moral and ethical values, in order to properly explain our definition of sustainable development. As it is now, the principles of sustainable development have developed a process, but we need to address the more fundamental value issues to ensure that the process reaches its intended goal.

Several participants explored the difficult, yet immediate, issue of comparing economic values against environmental ones, and the problem this poses for decision makers in applying principles of sustainable development. It was noted several times that there is a lack of a common denominator between economic and environmental considerations. This became a discussion of the practical application of the principles of sustainable development.

It is relatively easy for a logger to put an economic value on a beautiful valley of lumber. But how is that weighed against its aesthetic beauty?

Another participant expressed that same scenario in a slightly different way: we can put a value on a dead tree (as lumber), but we won't do the same for living things.

One participant noted the amount of money we spend when things become rare, such as millions of dollars to re-establish rare bird species and to protect their remaining habitat. Yet, for something so vital to human life as clean water, we charge only fractions of pennies for large amounts. That prompted the comment, that we hope we don't wait until there is only one river left before we try to save it.

The environment is becoming a growth industry, with environmental lawyers, accountants, and even psychologists. Among this new breed of environmental professionals is the environmental auditor who, for example, factors items such as health costs caused by pollution in arriving at economic equations.

Another participant spoke about the need to deal with long-term issues in order to adhere to the principles of sustainable development. Again using logging as a reference, immediate jobs become the focus of the debate if short-term considerations are emphasized. But if long-term consequences are considered, we would be discussing the type and location of future jobs; that would then allow a greater emphasis on long-term, sustainable solutions. It is also important that the principles of sustainable development be applied early in the process, before significant commitments have been made.

People want to maintain current standards of living which, it was suggested, is a major reason many people are interested in the environment and sustainable development. At some point it will become necessary to re-examine the realities of economic growth, which afford us our current life style, to see if they can be maintained.

Another participant emphasized the need to simplify the process. Everybody should be invited to be involved in thoughtful discussion. But without a reasonable approach, everything could become bogged down by regulators, courts, etc., ultimately to no one's satisfaction. As part of a broader debate, sustainable development raises questions of how governments make decisions for us. One participant suggested that debate could lead to an examination of the democratic system itself.

The matter of international co-operation was raised, as part of the discussion of the principles. It was noted how decisions made in one jurisdiction can affect others, and even provincial governments have a role to play with issues such as air emissions.

We were reminded of the Brundtland Commission's emphasis on equity. Because Third World countries (and, as we are learning, Soviet Block countries) are attempting to deal with severe economic situations, they are undertaking practices with dire environmental consequences.

A basic principle which must be appreciated is the finite reality of the planet Earth. The physical scale of human activity must be constrained at a level within the capability of the planet's ecosystem. Because economic and environmental value systems do not share the same common denominators, it may be difficult or impossible to compare their relative benefits. Ultimately, it will be future generations who judge how well we have adhered to the principles of sustainable development.

And, as one participant noted in complimenting one province's principles, while more time and refinement lie ahead, it is not just what we write, but how we act and what we achieve which will determine our destiny.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 2B: DEVELOPING STRATEGIES - PROCESS (PART TWO)

Process itself is important. The most important thing is to have a process for developing sustainable development strategy. It is important to get started and to have a process so it can continue to evolve. The strategy should be seen as a first step and it must be updated. Program should be scored.

Political commitment is the key; the process will not work without it.

In Prince Edward Island during the last election, each major political party was asked whether it would consider developing and implementing a provincial conservation strategy if elected. All three agreed.

Alberta has had a long public consultation process, and there does not seem to be a political will to actually do something.

Yukon has had extensive public consultation that lasted about two years, reasonable length of time.

The New Brunswick Round Table consists of 15 members, including five cabinet ministers. During the first meeting, there was little agreement among Round Table ministers.

The Sustainable Development Subcommittee, of which Louis Lapierre is the chairperson, consists of two industrialists and two environmentalists.

In developing a strategy for sustainable development, two important criteria were established. First, public participation was deemed to be the key. Secondly, the report had to be practical.

Public participation consisted of 12 meetings held across the province. Over 220 written briefs were submitted and many oral presentations were made. This public consultation process provided many important discussions, and the process served to educate both the public who participated and the members of the Round Table.

After the public consultation process 13 sectoral groups were established. Each sectoral group consisted of about 15 members

all identified as key individuals during the public consultation process. A steering committee consisting of the chair, and each group provides direction to these groups.

Once the sectoral groups were established, senior civil servants were invited to a briefing on the organizational structure, and each government department was asked to adopt one sectoral group and to serve as a resource to that group. This provided the groups with the staff resources they required, and also ensured the participation of bureaucrats.

The New Brunswick Round Table is preparing a draft strategy for April-May of 1991, and a final strategy for January 1991.

Workshop participants congratulated New Brunswick for its ambitious undertaking, particularly in relation to the extensive public participation. It was generally acknowledged that this was one of the most important components of the process.

The Saskatchewan Round Table did not hold public consultations. One of the potential implications of this is the possible public perception that the document was imposed on them. It was also noted that the government would be more likely to accept and adopt a report that was supported by the public.

The issue of how to get bureaucrats to "buy in" to the process was discussed. It was noted that public consultation was one tool to decrease resistance to change on the part of bureaucrats. Mr. Lapierre also noted that in New Brunswick the process of asking government departments to adopt a sectoral group served to get bureaucrats involved in the development of a sustainable development strategy which in turn would lessen their resistance to change.

In Ontario the Round Table reports directly to the Premier. The process being followed is one of outlining an agenda in the form of the challenge paper, which will serve as a discussion tool with the public. Since the public is being consulted extensively, so it was considered important to first identify the issues for discussion.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 2C: EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

David Johnston informed participants about the activities of the Education and Communication subcommittee of the National Round Table. The six projects below were described and a summary of these was distributed.

1. Canada Wide Science Fairs
2. "Participation"-like approach to sustainable development
3. sustainable development in school curricula. This lends itself to co-operative efforts. The Round Table sees its role as advisory to the Council of Ministers of Education as education is the responsibility of the provincial Ministries of Education.
4. SEEDS model for sustainable development education. SEEDS has developed educational materials.
5. Municipal information kits. These have been developed to stimulate Round Tables at the municipal and local levels.
6. Sustainable development principles. These are being used for educational and awareness purposes.

Mr. Johnston also noted a proposal for an Environmental and Public Policy Magazine which would have as its objective "to bridge the gap between scientific research and public policy in the field of the environment." The Royal Society would be responsible for operating a non-profit organization to manage the project. Distribution would be to decision-makers throughout the Commonwealth.

It is important not to ignore the issue of research. The federal "green plan" emphasizes the areas of science, technology and research. Higher education can respond by developing the people capable of working in these areas. It can also develop the research knowledge. There is currently a talent shortage.

The key is development of cross-specialization, the ability to work with people in other areas. We will need more of these "intellectual bridge builders." Research granting councils, universities, etc. must respond in a co-ordinated way.

Patrick Moore reported on British Columbia's intention to establish a research institute on sustainable development. This had been one of the recommendations of the Strangway Report. The B.C. Round Table will be proposing its structure, etc. The criteria are that it must

1. be independent and credible; it must provide a source of information believed by the public,
2. be broadly based, have representation from various sectors,
3. be flexible,
4. have a focus on cost-recovery, and
5. clearly establish the long-term funding that would be necessary to maintain its operations (for example, through a trust).

The research institute is still in the discussion stage but some of the issues Discussed were the following.

1. Should the institute should be separate from the Round Table or should it answer to the Round Table?
2. What should the make-up of the board of directors be? Should researchers be in the majority or is there a concern about having too many "academics"? What about representatives from industry, government and non-governmental organizations?
3. What type of research should qualify? Should it focus on public policy or technological development?
4. What level of public consultation is required before a recommendation on the institute's mandate and structure can be made by the Round Table? The Round Table has decided that consultations will be held and, perhaps more importantly, a full airing of the topic will occur at the Round Table.
5. What mechanisms should be in place for evaluating the institution?

A difference between traditional environmental education and education which embraces the concept of sustainable development was noted. Sustainable development means the marrying of environmental and economic issues. It is important that linkages be developed with the Round Table process.



Educational change will involve curriculum revision and the in-servicing of teachers including a follow-up. There is a need for contact with Faculties of Education concerning teacher education programs. We need to be concerned with "teaching the teachers."

A question was raised concerning the public consultations surrounding the research institute. Public input is being solicited through a survey. Interest was expressed about the existence of any models of such an institution. Some university-based ones do, but the intent of this institution is to have the universities co-operate (somewhat like the "centres of excellence" approach).

It was noted that since research is so inter-disciplinary we must bring people together who can deal in this inter-disciplinary way. The activities of the Council of Ministers of Education and the Council of Environment Ministers can, perhaps, be seen as the genesis of further action in the area of education. The participation of Ministers of Education on the Round Table was seen as a positive idea.

The lack of youth participation was a concern. The educational system must be central to achieving sustainable development, but it was noted that schools have not traditionally been successful in communicating fundamental science concepts to students. Education is important in the long-term, but there is a need for mass public education as well.

The role of the Round Tables in education was discussed. Teachers need resources to provide to children, and it was suggested that Round Tables could assist in identifying these, compiling lists and making the resources available. The Education subcommittee should be expanded and the Round Table should spearhead efforts to reach children.

A lack of information was a concern. At universities, for example, there is little information that relates to agriculture. Perhaps the Round Tables could gather information, perhaps even develop curricula.

Help children avoid the ideological split, black-and-white thinking. In particular, protecting the environment shouldn't be seen as an unquestionable good pursued with religious fervour. And children must come to know that our knowledge is uncertain and incomplete.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 2D: PRIVATE SECTOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

There was a general discussion of implementing sustainable development in the private sector as well as a more detailed description of the approach in two companies.

Inco Ltd. has a corporate environment policy prominently posted throughout its facilities. Its statement of general principle balances economic growth with the good stewardship of resources. A series of policy statements dealing with such things as environmental audits and compliance with regulations will follow.

Inco's environmental audit program covers a wide variety of activities including air and water pollution. Physical surveys of facilities are undertaken, sample records are examined, etc. Under Inco's capital appropriation program, each request must be accompanied by a thorough environmental review. These reviews follow an exhaustive checklist.

Shell Canada has greatly increased the attention to sustainable development over the last year. The company's 30 most senior executives met for two days to produce a policy statement on sustainable development. This statement commits the company to integrate economic and environmental decision making to promote sustainable development. The company has committed itself to a consultative process with the public. Next, targets will be established and each part of the organization will prepare a sustainable development plan.

The Canadian Petroleum Association has developed a formal code of practice, environmental guidelines, environmental audit guidelines and public participation guidelines.

The Canadian Petroleum Products Institute has turned its attention to co-operative emergency response plans for spills. The Canadian Chemical Producers Association has developed a Responsible Care Program, a guideline for how products should be handled. The Mining Association of Canada has prepared an Environmental Policy Statement, as has the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association.

The Manitoba Round Table is planning to introduce Environmental Codes of Ethics with which to target the industry association. Round Table members will try to convince the association to adopt sustainable development principles. It is expected the associations would then convince their members to follow suit.

It was noted that if industry adopted environmentally friendly procurement policies, it could be a powerful lever towards sustainable development.

Several participants noted that it would be more difficult to influence small businesses to adopt sustainable development principles. However, the examples set by larger firms, the activities of Round Tables and tax incentives could help in this regard. It was felt that industry associations were, in general, fairly enlightened and would help disseminate the principles to their members.

It was suggested that the Government could sponsor a "blue barrel" program to assist smaller operators to recycle oil.

Industries that run high-temperature furnaces could help dispose of some chemicals, but they run the risk of being liable if there are any environmental consequences and, therefore, would hesitate to do it.

It was noted that the Manitoba government announced a public sector sustainable development strategy and that this was in part due to the fact that several cabinet ministers were on the Round Table.

The municipal level of government could also establish a Round Table process as has been done in Peterborough. In this regard Manitoba is contemplating a program to assist municipalities.



The facilitator summarized the session by noting that the question had been posed: What are the best approaches to promoting sustainable development within the private sector? It was concluded that a primary means was by communication of good examples. It was also noted that much of the acceptance of sustainable development principles and approaches hinges upon the ability of industry to measure the quality of development-the extent to which principles are reflected in practice. The National Round Table is addressing the issue and their work will be of continuing interest to all Round Tables.

Manitoba recommended its approach of targeting Code of Practice information at industry associations leaving further promotion to the ripple effect that will be engendered amongst their membership. It was pointed out that small business has, in many cases, few resources available to implement sustainable practices. ("When you're up to your neck in alligators, its hard to remember you came to drain the swamp.") It was concluded that government had a role to play in assisting them.

The last point had prompted the general question: What can government do to help? It was concluded that there is a legitimate role for legislation and that government needs clear signals from industry regarding the help, both statutory and otherwise, that it needs. A last major conclusion is that a large part of the approach to private industry must be undertaken by sustainable development organizations established at the municipal level.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 2E: MARKET INCENTIVES & FISCAL POLICIES FOR IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This is a repeat of session 1E where the resource paper was previously reported on. Therefore only the discussion is reflected.

This topic interacts and interrelates with many others.

There is interest in identifying those incentive paths that might not be fruitful to best insure that time required would be devoted to those that suggest the greatest success. Incentives have been used in many areas and in many situations with only a checker-board of success.

A comprehensive list of incentives and incentive initiatives would be very useful to assist in dealing with environmental incentives. The consensus, however, was that such a list of incentives would be very small.

An example of a possible incentive was taken from the previous workshop and dealt with tradable emission permits based upon regulated standards. There was some difference of opinion on the validity of this approach. Carrying capacity would have to be factored into the standard and this was interpreted as a licence to pollute. A ceiling or cap would have to be identified. There was some discussion on the U.S. Clean Air Act as a possible example of how this might be implemented. On the down side, however, there has already been some indication from industrialists that they "would not" sell the tradable portion but rather would retain them as a way of discouraging competition. Discussion on this suggest that more (rather than less) "environmental policemen" would be required.

In developing countries such incentives would not deal with the problem. For example, the pollution caused by using wood for heating fuel could not easily be reduced and alternative solutions are not readily available.

Market incentives are an aspect of the normal pricing system and, therefore, full social costs should be reflective. When applied, these are viewed as punitive and the ideal is to provide positive rather than negative incentives.

There was disagreement on the notion that business generally seeks market incentives and that environmentalists seek punitive regulations and that all would seek the most reasonable solutions.

Focused taxation does not seem reasonable because of the lack of an adequate information base and the political will. Some current incentives and taxes create unintended environmental damage, e.g. agricultural incentives, although there is some basis for the position that some agricultural practices might be beneficial.

If we are to be successful we must focus on both the supply and demand side of economics rather than dealing with only one or the other.

Some environmental procurement policies being established in some jurisdictions are demonstrating market incentives for both supply and demand. As well, environmental agreements and accord between jurisdictions are demonstrating leadership in this area and are likely to give rise to new technologies.





FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

APRIL 28TH, OPENING PLENARY SESSION

John Wright, Vice President, The Angus Reid Group

The issue of environment has cascaded on Canadian society, with a remarkable growth in public concern and an ace of marketing organizations, policy makers and journalists to keep up. The issues are both scientific and inextricably linked to public opinion - touching Canadians at every part of their everyday lives.

Over the last ten years, environment has risen from a fringe issue (5% of the public concerned) to become the top issue recently (40% concerned). Mr. Wright indicated that from a 1989 survey (Canadians and the Environment - The Perspectives of Canadian Adults and School Children), and recent follow-up studies, consistent patterns emerge: the environment issue has established deep roots and there is a communications gap between those who care and those who hold positions of power in either corporations or government. So bridging the communications gap may be the first necessary step.

The presentation covered a few myths about the environment and public opinion, some segments of public opinion, and the apparent communications gaps.

Myth 1: There is an understanding of sustainable development.

Reality: Only 0.66% of the public even know that it is linked to the environment.

Myth 2: The environment as an issue will go away when times are economically tough. Reality: Consumers believe times are getting tougher, but the issue still persists, ahead of Meech Lake and the economy.

Myth 3: Canadians will put there money where their mouth is. Reality: Do as I say and not as I do.

Myth 4: This is a media thing and they will soon go on to another issue. Reality: The issue is becoming institutionalized e.g. the environment beat of newspapers and the present environment of corporations.

Attitudinal segmentation of Canadians is really revelant to decision-making leaders: to know who is driving this issue and to chart appropriate courses to meet the challenge of their expectations. There are seven sub-groupings:

1. The Environmentally Hostile (11%). View: there is no problem
2. The fatalists (13%). View: problems cannot be solved
3. The Apathetic (14%). View: poverty does not allow the luxury of considering the environment
4. The Anxious (15%). View: concerned but powerless, but supportive of tough measures.
5. The Environmental Enthusiasts (9%). View: leadership through example
6. The Privileged Optimist; (20%). View: we can change the world, but disagree on how much is needed
7. The Environmental Activists (18%). View: wedded but pessimistic, and distrustful of both business and government.

But, what do these various clusters mean? There is an analogy with the ocean, where there are ripples, waves and tides. The ripples are the day-in and day-out occurrences, such as the protest. While relevant, they are isolated and immediate in nature. The waves are stronger and consistent: such as recycling. It has achieved a perpetual motion and is here to stay. But the most significant force is the tidal wave. In terms of the environment, the undercurrents are strong, gaining momentum and the sea change is on the horizon. The attitudinal segmentation suggests that Canadians are on the move to enhance a deeper environmentally participative society.

So, what do we do about it?

We must clearly and articulately understand these segments: their interrelationships, motivators and trigger points, and then construct initiatives and activities that will encourage input, strategies and proactive opportunities.

Secondly, the key decision-makers have a tremendous challenge ahead because their credibility is at the bottom of the list. Time and tolerance levels are limited. Some sectors are viewed as careful and others as careless. Leaders must stand up and tell people that they care and are doing something about it. There is a risk that the term sustainable development may be defined and usurped by others. Marketers must be careful, targeted and true. Legislators should understand that the law is regarded by many as an inexpensive tool to get a serious problem done. In its early stages the tidal wave is imperceptible. So gather your information, watch the weather and begin construction sooner rather than later.

What is the driving thrust toward better packaging law and mandatory recycling. Consumers are questioning the size of and need for packaging. People define recycling from their own perspectives, e.g. in Ontario it is the blue box program.

A delegate questioned the anomalies between individuals and other ways that populations may be segmented. There are no neat patterns and there are crossovers.

A question on the adequacy of the legislation confirmed that many support compulsory measures, but one must look at the regional picture and subsets to obtain an overview.

A question on seniors showed that they are both anxious and apathetic by nature. They are looking for credible information, they have lots of leisure time.

Mr. Wright observed that individual credibility appears to depend on profile and profession, but also to some the degree of exposure. For example, with the highest credibility are David Suzuki, environmental groups and David Nichols of Loblaw's/Supervalu. Given the low credibility of government, perhaps they should establish/use an independent body as watchdog or regulator.

Round Tables should ask, who are your clients and, knowing that, what will you do for them. A lot of people are able to contribute input, not just policy makers. Information can be exchanged and solutions arrived at.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3A: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION

Dr. Louis Lapierre provided an overview of the consultation process used by New Brunswick for developing a sustainable development strategy. The Round Table subcommittee named to develop this strategy used two processes: public meetings and the establishment of sectoral groups. The information from the public hearings was related to the sectoral groups which brought in the major stakeholders. Consultations were to initiate early involvement of the public and gain their commitment.

A brochure containing brief papers on each sectoral group was prepared. Care was taken with the presentation, cover, logo, etc. An image was established, and a slogan to reflect this. The Round Table invited the public through newspaper and radio announcements. Results of the meetings were published. All the transcript information is available for future reference.

There are plans to produce an "update" newsletter with short topics to be sent to all households. An innovative approach for this would be to send them with electricity bills, for example.

Other communication strategies include publishing sectoral reports and the draft sustainable development strategy, having Round Table members speak to interested groups, providing information on demonstration projects, preparing an environmental checklist, and presenting awards.

Jack Dubois reviewed Manitoba's actions relating to public consultation. The Manitoba Round Table initially developed a set of principles and guidelines one of which refers specifically to the nature of public participation. The process involves developing draft substrategy documents and holding public information meetings. Feedback would be published and when taken into account in the refinement of the substrategy, should come back to the Round Table to be finalized.

Existing inadequacies are the often poor (short notice of meetings), the rushed process, and not allowing for a great deal of meaningful dialogue. As well, the public should have further opportunities for input after the product is available.

Mr. Dubois recommended a document produced by the Canadian Environmental Network entitled "Public Participation: The Rationale and the Model."

Noted was a range of processes to develop sustainable development strategies, from a short-term and mainly internal approach to a long-term extensive public/community involvement.

Discussion

There was interest in how information went out and the formats used. In addition to announcements on radio, in newspapers, a toll-free number was available. It was important that meetings have open structures where briefs could be presented, but also as forums for debate. Published documents or newspapers ads can provide a type of "clip-out" request for information and encourage further contact.

The need to identify the limited resources available was mentioned. Government and Round Table support were two important sources. The public are tired of the usual approach to public consultation, they want real involvement. The process must become more efficient so the public is not overwhelmed.

It was noted that society is changing and different kinds of people are now interested. The participation of high profile people assists this. Innovation is what is needed to accomplish this.

Finally, it was noted that more productive and cost-effective processes for public consultation need to be found and that Round Tables should prepare the strategies for this.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3B: THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES - IS THERE A ROLE FOR THE ROUND TABLES?

Lindsay Staples challenged the National Round Table to provide leadership across Canada. He observed that the approaches taken by Round Tables are different across the country in terms of how the work is done. But these groups have their hands full with limited financial and human resources. Without a national strategy it may be difficult to develop a common agenda. Provinces and Territories direct their efforts down toward local issues and it's often difficult to focus on national ones.

Discussion

1. The relationship of the National Round Table to the federal government, in particular, Environment Canada.

The National Round Table can bring a different perspective to the issues that Environment Canada addresses from within the bureaucracy. Concern that the federal government often sacrifices results in favour of jurisdictional issues.

The National Round Table's contribution to public policy issues will be indirect. It may be most effective when it gives its "umbilical cord" to the federal government. It can be seen as an "outside" organization which can have a direct impact on federal policy and reflect what is going on in the larger community.

The federal government has made it clear it is not looking to the National Round Table for advice on its Green Plan.

2. The role of the National Round Table.

The most significant work may be done by Round Table committees on specific topics or sectors, e.g. waste management. These committees can work with Round Tables across the country to resolve interjurisdictional issues and co-ordinate programs.

The National Round Table can be an important vehicle for building a network. It may not be able to set an agenda for provincial or territorial round tables but it could bring people together. It could focus on broad issues affecting the entire country, e.g. carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It may also address issues affecting developing nations.

Round Tables at each level may have different time-tables for their activities; local/municipal today, provincial this year, and national in the future.

The National Round Table may not be able to do more than address issues at the front end to recommend preventive action while provincial Round Tables address today's existing problems. It may be a vehicle for resolving common private sector issues which may affect public policy in the future.

3. Institutional change.

The problem is not with policy, the technology or with financial resources. The issue is how to change institutions and the way they make decisions to reflect the broader concerns of citizens. The way universities, crown corporations and departments of government operate has to change.

Sectoral visions are inconsistent with the real world. A unifying context within which to make decisions has been lacking. Perhaps sustainable development can provide this broad perspective and reduce the barriers presented by our current public sector institutions.

4. A national strategy.

The idea is not dead, but for it to happen there has to be a grass roots' demand for it and involvement in its development. If imposed from the top down, it won't work. The provincial and territorial governments must endorse the idea and request that work begin.





FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3C: LEGISLATIVE CHANGE AND THE ROUND TABLES

Charles Ferguson set the stage by sharing some of his experiences as a secretariat member of the Environment and Economy Task Force. Recalling Camelot and the Knights of the Round Table provided the inspiration for the concept of "Round Tables" and insuring longevity to the task force report.

David Runnalls opened by suggesting the topic was difficult to approach. Firstly one needed to sort out the relationship between Round Tables and government before addressing the question fully, i.e., are they advisory only or do they have some direct responsibility? Establishment varies between jurisdictions and, therefore there's some confusion of the roles. Secondly, their independence from or dependence on government may well dictate what that role will be.

A number of the 40 recommendations in the task force report relate to specific legislative and government changes. For example, government decisions should be vetted through some sustainable development screening. Clearly, in some jurisdictions the Round Tables' responsibility would appear to end with the tabling of appropriate documents and recommendations with government. In others, a series of recommendations might well deal with areas where policy changes would give rise to companion changes in legislation, and in some, specific thrusts for changes in legislation will be provided.

There is also a need to examine whether an institutional approach to monitoring will be left with Round Tables, since it is felt that sustainable development actions will not continue and endure without some institutionalization or core group's responsibility to monitor. A sustainable development reporting system might be enshrined in legislation. Other options for monitoring might include an environmental or sustainable development auditor, an environmental ombudsman, or a parliamentary commission (New Zealand's approach). Since all jurisdictions are in the early stages of dealing with Round Table activities, some of these decisions are yet to be made and will require re-examination in the future.

Interjurisdictional matters and differences are an ongoing problem in many fields but will require attention in the arena of sustainable development as well, and a "level playing field" is required. Institutionalizing might facilitate networking to deal with common issues.

The advantages and disadvantages of Cabinet level participation was debated at some length. Whereas a major strength is that of facilitating rapid change in government, the implications of a change in government could pose problems, but it was recognized that this would all be influenced by the nature of Round Table responsibilities (advisory or direct action). The dangers of partisan politics and Round Tables as pawns in election campaigns was addressed.

As Round Tables take shape some membership thrusts are intended to speak for constituents, however most seem to address the need for varied stakeholder background and expertise. Since political "culture" varies in different jurisdictions, one must anticipate that Round Tables also will vary. As well, it would seem that individual members on the same Round Table view their respective roles differently. The "glue" or binding agent must exist for these to be successful in the long run with consensus building the thrust.

In summary, it would seem that Round Tables will have some role in legislative changes, that they would all deal primarily with necessary changes in policy which could give rise to legislative changes. Depending on the relationship between the Round Tables and their respective governments, the terms of reference under which they (Round Tables) are to operate, will play a more prominent role in legislation than will others. Of much more fundamental importance, however, is the need to pursue environmental-economic integration and the necessary changes in our process and institutions to bring this about under a multi-partitive/multi-stakeholder atmosphere and with a high degree of public input. The role of Round Tables in facilitating this activity must be expected to vary between jurisdictions.





FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3D: REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY ROUND TABLES

The City of Peterborough established a Sustainable Development Committee in 1988. There is a growing awareness in the city of the link between development and environment. The committee therefore includes representatives from industry, business, government, religion, academia, etc.

The Peterborough Committee is broken down into subcommittees: business and industry, projects, policy and planning, and education. The committee began its work by circulating the International Chamber of Commerce's Environmental Guidelines for World Industry to business and industry. A series of awards has been instituted. The principles of sustainable development are being incorporated into the city's plan.

In British Columbia the polarization between environment and industry has not abated. Opinion can be very divided at the local level or witnessed at local meetings about controversial development issues, e.g. logging, smelting, etc. A regular local forum to air these issues might be useful. However, it would not be wise to structure such local committees on subsets of the Provincial Round Table. Furthermore, it was suggested that such a local committee should not replace the need for local meetings or hearings on specific issues. There was also a suggestion that local committees, such as the January Group in Brandon, Manitoba, should emerge spontaneously. We should be careful about artificially stimulating such groups.

The National Round Table is preparing a kit for presentation at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in Quebec City. This kit will assist municipalities in understanding the concept of sustainable development.

In Ontario there is no structure linking local Round Tables to the Provincial Round Table. It was suggested that such links might not be all that important.

A laboratory of sustainable development has been established in the Lac St. Jean region of Quebec. The region represents logging, farming, smelting and mining in an isolated area containing a major lake and the Saguenay River. There is now an attempt to integrate these issues.

The Peterborough Sustainable Development Committee has not asked the Provincial Round Table for funding directly. However, a proposal from Trent University to undertake a sustainable development strategy for the City and area is before the Provincial Round Table for review. It was suggested that funding should be considered on a project-by-project basis.

Decisions in the future are going to be more and more difficult. Development can not be stopped. Decisions must reflect both environmental and industrial requirements. Otherwise, lawlessness could prevail.

There was consensus on the following issues.

1. Some mechanism is required to achieve sustainable development at the local level. However, there were divergent views as to whether that mechanism should be called a Round Table.
2. The local sustainable development or Round Table should not replace other means for accessing public input to issues.
3. The appropriate terms of reference for a local sustainable development committee should be left up to the committee itself.
4. The local committees or Round Tables should be related, in network fashion, to each other and to Provincial Round Tables. However, no formal linking structure should be established.
5. The costs of sustainable development should be shared by all involved interest groups. In the case of government, the appropriate distribution of costs among the various levels of government will vary with the type of project.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3E: SHARED INITIATIVES

There is a feeling that there is a major need to co-ordinate all the initiatives. It is important to design for interaction.

The human dimension is often overlooked. This is a common linkage. It is largely a question of equity. Equity and sustainable development start in our own backyard. To some degree we will have to overcome the hurdle of resources. Limited resources, or lack of allocation of resources for the Round Table, result in uneven representation on initiatives. This could refer to aboriginal representation, sectoral representation, etc. The list is open-ended.

Meetings such as this are crucial. The more the better. They can act as a sounding board, for the exchange of ideas and for networking. There is serious concern that the media will be expecting some hard recommendation from this. That is not our purpose, and we should be careful to indicate that this is a first meeting and that it is mainly a learning, "getting-to-know-you" gathering where we determine where we are and gain a better understanding of some of the issues.

Round Tables should never act in a refereeing or dispute mechanism role. There is a danger that Round Tables will lose their purpose as a marriage of environment and economy. We must not become an environmental lobby group.

The possibility of shared initiatives for state-of-the-environment reporting should also be considered. This concept works on much the same principle as sustainable development. The possibility of involving business and industry in the reporting process would increase the accuracy and effectiveness of the reporting process. As well, an independent body should be considered for the actual data gathering. The private sector would be much more amiable to providing information to private firms with the various guarantees in their charters.

At the same time as ensuring equity throughout the Round Table system, we have to ensure that everyone has a substantial input. How is this to ensue? If we do not have a hard-and-fast membership policy, there is the danger of perpetuating the problem that is at the core of the issues we are faced with, that is, extending the bureaucracy and setting the stage for inaction.

The practicality of sharing initiatives must be considered. There is a tremendous amount of effort that goes into a conference such as this. The subject of limited resources and co-ordination on a national level must be considered.

Subcommittees on a sectoral or regional basis may provide a more efficient mechanism of sharing ideas and information. Each committee or meeting could address a specific area or concern, or target a specific sector or organization.



FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3F: PREPARING FOR 1991 (QUEBEC) MEETING

The objective of this workshop was to explore how the Round Tables could contribute to the 1991 conference in Quebec. However, since there were no participants at this workshop, its organizers participated in other discussions.

Mr. Jacques Dufour, chair of the 1991 conference, indicated that he would like feedback from Round Table members on the following issues.

1. Is the 1991 conference intended to change things in Canada? After so many speeches, seminars, and the development of strategies, is it time to focus on implementation?
2. Should the 1991 conference be a "different" conference, something other than more speeches?
3. Are concrete results what decision-makers and the public want?
4. Should the 1991 conference focus on the future, perhaps on a 5-year timetable?
5. Should the 1991 conference make a major contribution in the preparation of the Canadian position for the 1992 United Nations World Conference on Environment and Development?

Members of the organizing committee of the 1991 conference.

Federal Government:	Paul Rump.
Northwest Territories:	Heather Myers.
Yukon:	Stephan Fuller.
British Columbia:	Jamie Alley.
Alberta:	Jim Taylor.
Saskatchewan:	Sheldon McLeod.
Manitoba:	Frank Cosway.
Ontario:	Ken Richards.
New Brunswick:	Charlene Gaudet-Sleep.
Nova Scotia:	Peter Underwood.
Prince Edward Island:	Ron MacNeil.
Newfoundland:	David Jeans.
National Round Table:	Francois Rioux.
Quebec:	Jacques Dufour, Chair.

Mr. Harvey Mead stated that the goals of the 1991 conference should be

1. as action-oriented as possible, and
2. the conference should be structured to lay the groundwork for the preparation of the Canadian position in the 1992 World Conference on Environment and Development.

The following documents were distributed and are available on request.

1. Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Minutes, Quebec proposal for a Canadian Conference on Sustainable Development in 1990.
2. Conference Profile, discussed by C.C.M.E. on June 7th, 1989.
3. Organizing Committee of the 1991 Canadian Conference on Sustainable Development - Extracts of the summary of the March 16th, 1990 conference call (Draft April 9th, 1990).
4. Discussion Ideas, used by the Conference Organizing Committee at a meeting on April 17th, 1990.
5. The United Nations 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, issues contemplated to be addressed.





FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

WORKSHOP 3G: INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Peter Kilburn, President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (I.I.S.D.) chaired the workshop. The participants were joined by I.I.S.D. Chairman, Lloyd McGinnis and Board Members Professor Art Hanson from Dalhousie University and Dr. Clay Gilson from the University of Manitoba.

Peter Kilburn provided a brief background of the mandate and structure of the Institute. He was looking for reaction to the Institute's plans, information on any Round Table activities related to the Institute's work, and how the Round Tables and the Institute can work co-operatively.

The workshop discussed how the I.I.S.D. would differ from other establishments with similar mandates around the world. But many institutions are still using old methods. The I.I.S.D. can influence them to change, and also be a leader in promoting sustainable development among international agencies, e.g. the World Bank.

There was some discussion about the role of the proposed British Columbia Research Institute for Sustainable Development, which might also have a global focus although its primary purpose would be to support research into issues of concern to British Columbia, e.g. forestry sector. It was seen as important that there be a clear distinction between the international and British Columbian institutes, particularly to obviate confusion outside Canada. There should only be one Canadian institute for sustainable development.

There was considerable discussion of the I.I.S.D.'s role in promoting/marketing environmental technologies. While it may be a catalyst for development, it should not be marketing Canadian technology abroad. "Tied aid" was also discussed. It was suggested that the Institute provide knowledge, skills and leadership to assist developing countries implement changes consistent with sustainable development, rather than force Canadian goods and services on them.

Mentioned was the recent establishment of U.N.E.P. Canada, in affiliation with Ryerson Technical Institute in Toronto and with financial assistance from the Ontario Government. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment would be willing to consider financial support of I.I.S.D. if approached.

It was suggested that the institute should contact non-government groups with an international focus, such as Probe International, which is planning a trip to Brazil this June. Also, there are important contacts in national environment and development groups in other countries.

There was a strong sense that much could be gained by ongoing communications between I.I.S.D. and the Round Tables on Environment and Economy. One example is the applicability of Round Table work in rural and northern regions to the Institute's relations with Third World countries. Also perceived is an important link between the Round Tables and I.I.S.D. in relation to sustainable development and aboriginal peoples. Non-government members of Round Tables could be a particularly important resource for the institute.

Suggestions to ensure direct and ongoing liaison between the I.I.S.D. and the Round Tables:

1. I.I.S.D. representation at joint meetings of Round Tables, with special workshops like today's.
2. Annual meeting between representatives of the Round Tables and I.I.S.D.
3. Establishment of a permanent advisory panel or committee comprising representatives of I.I.S.D. and one from each Round Table.
4. Round Tables could serve as "Friends of the Institute."

The I.I.S.D. would pursue these and other mechanisms to ensure liaison between itself and the Round Tables.





FIRST JOINT MEETING OF ROUND TABLES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PREMIÈRE RENCONTRE DES TABLES RONDES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

APRIL 28TH CLOSING PLENARY SESSION

Dr. Mead's address to the final closing plenary concentrated on the upcoming Canadian Conference in Quebec in 1991, as he provided historical background, progress to date, and the goals and aspirations of the conference.

Dr. Mead noted that the National Task Force on Environment and Economy, whose report in 1987 resulted in the creation of the Round Tables, also recommended that Quebec host an important Canadian conference on sustainable development. In accepting Manitoba's invitation to the 1990 conference of the Round Tables, the premiers expected one of its roles would be to help prepare for 1991. Last October, the Quebec Minister of Environment invited each government to appoint a member to the organizing committee. The committee has been in existence for two months and has held two meetings.

While the committee is considering both its mandate and the many various aspects of the conference, it is possible to consider (with reservations) that the conference will be a major key event to stimulate clear and precise discussion of many fundamental issues related to sustainable development.

It will also be used as a lead-up for Canada to the 1992 World Conference in Brazil. Canada is seen as world leader in its commitment to and planning of sustainable development, especially because of the work of the National Task Force. If Canada is going to play a major role on the international stage, she must arrive at Sao Paulo able to prove that she is cleaning up her own backyard. The Quebec conference, allows some time between the two conferences for adjustments to take place.

At the same time, the public is demanding action, and not just more speeches, studies and strategies. The Quebec conference will attract decision-makers, both in and out of government, empowered to take action. Round Tables, whose memberships are composed of exactly those types of people, need to attend, and received an invitation from Dr. Mead to do so. They can also expect further consideration in the time leading up to the Quebec conference as to their contribution.

Arthur Campeau stated that at a meeting a month ago, the organizing group for the Brazil 1992 conference established two working groups whose membership is open to any United Nations member country. One working group will address atmospheric and land issues and another will address oceans, freshwater and waste issues. A third working group will be established later to consider legal and institutional issues.

Additional preparatory meetings will be held over the next 18 months. There is a commitment that the conference will not operate in isolation from other activities and conferences around the world covering every aspect of the environment. Each region has agreed to hold its own preparatory conference in advance of the United Nations conference.

Another component of the conference planning is a commitment to the healthy involvement of major independent sector organizations. Such involvement is by no means the usual practice around the world. It should be remembered that the United Nations Charter begins "we the people." While United Nations members are government states, the United Nations constituency is the peoples of the world. In many countries non-profit citizens' groups are growing in number on environmental issues.

We may have reached the point where a centre is necessary to contribute the "views of the people" to decision-making at the United Nations. The premise is that these views will become part of the decision-making process.

The Brazil Conference will be an opportunity for heads of states to commit their countries to concrete actions and to set the future agenda.

Canada has the potential to serve as a model for the rest of the world. We have an excellent reputation internationally, a keen and interested public, new institutions like the Round Tables, and a skilled scientific community. The consultation process on the Green Plan will help to formulate Canada's national position for the Brazil Conference.



A small secretariat has been established to co-ordinate Canadian preparations and to make sure our own positions and proposals are supported by all sectors and institutions.

The Premier of Manitoba, Gary Filmon, concluded the conference by thanking everyone responsible for its success, including the participants. The conference has resulted in a better understanding of the Round Tables and what they should be doing, as well as promoting networking for the future. The present Round Tables are pioneers of sustainable development, with a need to educate the public, develop principles, and promote and create institutional change to implement sustainable development.

Sustainable development must be much more than a theory or concept; it is instrumental in the planet's survival.

John Grant of the Ontario Round Table responded by expressing appreciation on behalf of the conference participants.